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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000892

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARPI, IO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/22/2015

TAGS: KUNR PREL PGOV BA UNSC

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN: PROMOTING U.S. PRIORITIES ON UN REFORM

REF: A. STATE 114051

1B. STATE 111657
1C. STATE 111637

Classified by A/DCM Helen H. Hahn for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Pol/Econ chief June 21 delivered reftel demarches on promoting U.S. priorities on UN reform to MFA Director for International Organization Affairs Ghassan Shaikho. (Note: Ambassador will deliver Ref B demarche to Foreign Minister Shaikh Mohammed following the Minister's return to Bahrain from Europe.) Shaikho promised to read through Ref A and C non-papers in detail, and offered comments on several of the issues.

12. (C) Shaikho gave his enthusiastic agreement, and relaxed considerably, upon learning that the USG wants to move forward on those issues where we can be successful while continuing to work on other issues that will take more time. He said there was no reason to hold up agreement on some items until there was agreement on all.

13. (C) On the Human Rights Council proposal, Shaikho wondered about the criteria the Council would use to label a human rights abuser, and suggested it be flexible enough to accommodate unexpected situations. He agreed that the goal should be to prevent flagrant offenders from joining the Council. On the point regarding voting Council members out, he thought this could be extremely difficult. A "gentler" way would be to remove them after their term on the Council runs out, thus using an election rather than a confrontation in the Council to remove them. He agreed on keeping the Council in Geneva.

14. (C) Regarding the Democracy Fund, Shaikho said that Bahrain is supportive but the MFA did not instruct the Bahraini PermRep to sign the letter to the SYG because of concern that signing the letter obligated or implied that the country would provide financial support for the Fund. Bahrain was not able to do this but is looking for the best way to support the Fund politically.

15. (C) Shaikho asked about the relationship between the proposed Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) and the 12 UN conventions on terrorism. He recommended that the UNSC be the monitoring/supervisory body for adherence to the CCIT.

16. (C) Shaikho concurred with the U.S. message that there is no need to rush into decisions on UNSC reform, saying that the U.S. ideas "suit Bahrain well." He suggested dealing with Security Council reform slowly, on "a low flame." He understood U.S. support for Japan only, but asked if it was realistic to expect Japan to join the UNSC without the other members of the Group of Four. He thought it better to take some time and develop a package of reform that all could agree on rather than pushing for a quick decision. Shaikho commented that, given the U.S. position, Germany and Japan would likely put off a vote in the UNGA to avoid being embarrassed.

MONROE